

# ***Customs and Courtesies***

## ***Acts of Respect and Politeness***



*Customs and Courtesies are proven traditions explaining what should and should not be done.*

Have you ever felt out of place at a social function because everyone else seemed to know the rules but you didn't? How about your first day at a new job? Or, think back to some public gathering at school or in your community when the people in charge didn't seem to know what they were supposed to do next and everyone (including the audience) felt embarrassed for them.

Every organization has some system of etiquette, a set of customs and mores that define the conduct of individuals belonging to the organization. It defines who has a cubicle and who has a corner office at IBM. It defines where professors park their cars compared to where students park theirs at the local college. It defines how one acts and when one speaks at meetings within a given company. Members of any organization are expected to conform to the customs and mores of the group to which they belong.

This lesson has two parts: Part I will discuss common customs and courtesies; while Part II will show you the salute, the position of attention, and the position of parade rest.

### **GOALS FOR THIS MODULE:**

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the grade structure of Civil Air Patrol.
2. Summarize customs and courtesies of Civil Air Patrol.
3. Demonstrate when and how to render a proper salute.
4. Give examples of proper courtesies to the flag.
5. Identify customs and courtesies associated with the local unit and/or wing.

## **PART I**

Listed below are some of the customs and courtesies that the Civil Air Patrol follows. Every CAP member holds a grade which symbolizes their length and progression in the program. You will also learn about when to render certain courtesies, such as the salute, during this segment.

### **Grade Structure of CAP**

One of the unique features of belonging to CAP is the opportunity to progress in a grade structure similar to that of the U.S. Air Force's military grades.

As your time and experience in CAP increase, so does the opportunity to advance in grade to assume higher levels of responsibility in the organization. Your progress in your unit and CAP is based in large measure on your initiative

and work to complete adult member professional development education requirements and to serve in staff and leadership positions in the unit. These initiatives also prepare you for responsibility at higher echelons.

If you are familiar with the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Army military grades, you already know the officer grades structure for CAP adult members. Insignia you might not be as familiar with are the three insignia for CAP flight officers that are for adult members who are not yet 21 years old (and therefore are not eligible for CAP's regular officer grade). <sup>1</sup>

As an adult member you should also be familiar with the cadet program's grade structure. You should view pictures of CAP's adult member and cadet grade structures on the mini poster you received in your new member binder. Specific requirements for uniforms and grade insignia are described and shown in CAPM 39-1 and CAPR 35-5.

### ***Grade Insignia, Proper Titles, and Titles of Address***

All CAP members and military personnel are addressed properly by their grade or title.

Airman First Class Jones is correctly addressed as "Airman Jones." Master Sergeant Smith may be called "Master Sergeant Smith" or "Sergeant Smith."

Cadet/Captain Brown could be addressed as "Captain Brown" or "Cadet Brown." Chief Master Sergeant Clifford would be called "Chief Clifford."

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<sup>1</sup> For examples of CAP grades, refer to your grade posters in your New Member kit.

Officers senior to you may be addressed by their rank and last name, or as "Sir" or "Ma'am." To officers junior to you, use their rank or rank and last name.

A lieutenant is addressed officially as "Lieutenant." A lieutenant colonel is addressed as "Colonel." A brigadier general or major general should be addressed as "General."

Incidentally, military and CAP grades do not address gender. One glaring mistake is to assume a ranking officer is male.

### **Customs and Courtesies**

Have you wondered why a civilian volunteer organization like CAP would worry about something so military sounding as customs and courtesies?

As we discussed at the beginning of the segment, every organization has a system of etiquette, a set of customs and traditions it uses to define the conduct of the organization and its members. CAP is the Air Force Auxiliary when conducting Air Force assigned missions. In part because of this status and developed over decades, CAP customs and mores are very similar, in fact based on, those practiced by the U.S. Air Force.



As a member of CAP, you should follow the traditions, standards, customs and courtesies agreed to and accepted by the USAF and CAP. To do so reflects your pride in CAP and the level of professionalism CAP needs to impress its customers, its Air Force partners, and the communities where its members serve and live.

### ***What are Customs and Courtesies?***

*When CAP members follow military customs and courtesies, they are continuing to demonstrate the importance of CAP's heritage.*

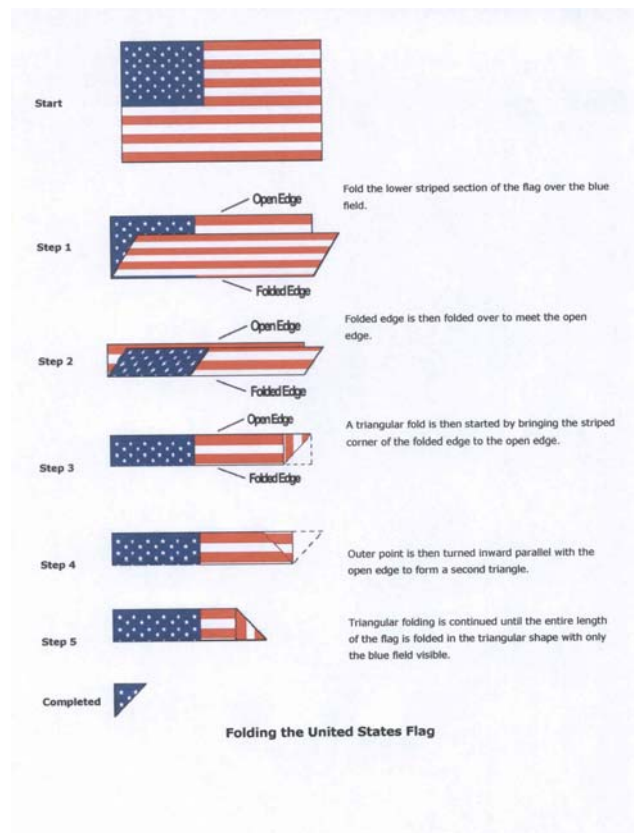
In the broadest sense, customs and courtesies are proven traditions that explain what should and should not be done.

They are acts of respect, and have evolved as a result of a need for order as well as the mutual respect and sense of fraternity that exist among military members and CAP members.

To be more specific, a custom is a social convention stemming from tradition, and enforced as unwritten law. A courtesy is a kind, polite behavior often linked to a custom. A military courtesy is an action taken to honor someone or something: a person because of their grade or position, or the flag because of what it represents.

For example, the position of honor has always been to the right, and senior officers (those with higher grade) will always walk to the right of others. This custom originated from medieval swordsmen who always wore their weapons on their left side and drew those weapons with their right hand. The strongest and most experienced warriors were given the place of honor to allow them easy access to their swords.

Another custom is the triangular folding of the American flag. It represents the tri-corner hats of the American patriots.



CAP customs and courtesies apply to ceremonies, meetings and gatherings, as well as our day-to-day work life. While there is not time to cover all customs and courtesies, today we will discuss the salute, as well as honors to the American flag, or "Colors."

### ***General Rules for Saluting***

While the salute is a simple concept to grasp and an easy movement to master with practice, the specific occasions and environments for rendering the salute can become confusing.

As a general rule, salutes are rendered as a courtesy between those officer junior (lower) in grade to those officers adult (higher) in grade. For instance, a lieutenant would salute a captain, a captain would salute a major, or a brigadier general would salute a major general.

If two members of the same grade meet, it's a good idea for them to salute as well. Salutes typically take place outdoors.

The junior officer initiates the salute as soon as the adult officer is recognized. It's also polite to greet the officer by saying, "Hello" or "Good afternoon," for example. Think of the salute as saying "hello" to your boss at work.

There are times when it is not practical or safe to salute. You don't need to salute if both of your hands are full, and you should not salute if on the flight line; but it would be appropriate to give a verbal greeting in these situations.

Additionally, while it is customary for CAP members to salute each other and to salute military members, keep in mind that military members do not have to salute CAP members, regardless of grade.

Let's now discuss some specific situations where the salute is used. Some are specific to military installations, while others are common to CAP and public ceremonies, and office situations.

#### *Ruffles and Flourishes*

A song known as "Ruffles and Flourishes" is played to honor certain high-ranking military and government officials, as well as foreign dignitaries. The song consists of a drum roll (ruffle) and a trumpet fanfare (flourish). Up to four ruffles and flourishes are played, depending on the rank and position of the person being honored.

*Indoors:* Upon hearing "Ruffles and Flourishes" indoors, if you're in uniform or civilian clothes, face the person being honored, come to and remain at attention until the last note of the music has been played.

*Outdoors:* Upon hearing "Ruffles and Flourishes" outdoors, while in AF-style uniform, come to attention, face the person being honored, and **present arms** (salute), remaining at attention until the last note of the music has been played.



CAP members in civilian clothes or in CAP-distinctive uniform, face the person being honored and stand at attention until the last note of music has played.

#### *Reporting to Senior Officers*

Typically, salutes are not rendered indoors. The exception to this is when you report to a senior officer. It is proper to salute the senior officer when reporting to him or her regardless of whether you are indoors or outside.

To report indoors, knock on the door and wait for the senior officer to ask you in. Walk directly to the senior officer until you are about two paces away. Stop, salute, and report ("Lieutenant Smith reports to Major Doe," for example).

When you are dismissed or at the end of the conversation, come to attention, salute, and walk directly out of the room.

Reporting outdoors follows the same basic sequence, with the obvious omissions of the door and furniture.

## ***Respect to the Flag and National Anthem***

The US Flag is a symbol of the principles and ideals our country stands for and should always be treated with respect. The National Anthem and the Pledge of Allegiance honor the flag and deserve the same respect.

How you render honors depends on the specific uniform that you choose to wear (in accordance with the *CAP Uniform Manual* requirements).

With the Air Force style uniforms (see the CAP Uniform Manual for details), saluting for flag and anthem honors is expected (some common examples are below).

For the CAP distinctive uniforms (see the CAP Uniform Manual for details), placing your hand over your heart for flag and anthem honors is the norm (an exception is with the newer CAP corporate uniform of the white shirt and blue epaulets, where saluting for flag and anthem honors is expected).

### ***Honoring the Flag Outdoors***

**Saluting the U.S. Flag:** When you're in the Air Force style uniform and an uncased flag passes by (such as in a parade or at a sporting event), you come to attention and salute when the flag comes within six paces of you and hold the salute until the flag passes six paces beyond you.

If in civilian clothes or most CAP distinctive uniform in the same situation, come to attention, remove your hat (if wearing one), and hold your hat in your right hand with your right hand over your heart when the flag is six paces before you; hold until the flag is six paces past you.

***NOTE: On Air Force installations, flags on stationary staffs are saluted only at reveille, retreat and on special occasions.***

**Retreat Ceremony:** On Air Force installations, the flag is lowered at the end of each day in a ceremony called "Retreat." Usually, the bugle call "Retreat" is sounded and is followed by the playing of the National Anthem or "To the Colors."

When outside, face the flag if it is visible or face the music if the flag is not visible. Stand at "Parade Rest" during the sounding of "Retreat."

At the first note of the National Anthem or "To the Colors," if in Air Force style uniform, come to attention and salute until the music is finished. If in civilian clothes or in most CAP distinctive uniforms, remove your hat (if wearing one) and hold your hat in your right hand with your right hand over your heart until the music is finished.

If you're in a vehicle as "Retreat" sounds, stop the vehicle and sit quietly until the music ends.

### ***The National Anthem & Pledge of Allegiance***

The process of paying respect during the National Anthem and during the Pledge of Allegiance is quite similar. When outdoors, if you are in the Air Force style uniform, come to attention, face the flag (or music) and salute at the first note of music (or the first word of the Pledge). Hold the salute until the end of the song (or the Pledge).

If in civilian clothes or most CAP distinctive uniforms, come to attention, remove your hat, and hold your hat in your right hand with your



right hand over your heart until the music stops (or Pledge ends).

### *Indoor Flag Ceremonies*

CAP members don't salute the national flag during indoor ceremonies when in the Air Force style uniform. When the National Anthem or "To the Colors" is played, and you are in Air Force style uniform, face the flag (or music) and stand at attention until the last note of music. During the Pledge of Allegiance, remain silent at attention.

If in civilian dress or most CAP distinctive uniforms, face the flag (or music), and remain at attention with your right hand over your heart. During the Pledge, hold the same position and recite the Pledge.

## **PART II**

Throughout our discussion, you've read about certain stances, or positions, you take in certain situations, such as "Present Arms (the salute)," "Parade Rest," or "Attention." In this part of the Customs and Courtesies lesson, you will learn these positions.

### **Three Important Drill Positions**

#### ***The Position of Attention***

The position of attention is the basic standing position. It places you in the correct posture and also allows you and the commander/leader of the activity to know that your focus is on him or her.

The position of attention has the following steps:



- a. You are standing straight, knees slightly bent (to avoid fainting).
- b. Your feet are together at the heel, with toes at 45-degree angles.
- c. Your arms at your sides, in-line with the seams of your trousers/slacks.

Your hands are cupped into a loose fist, with your thumb outside of your fist facing down.

- d. Your head faces forward, chin parallel to the ground. Your face shows no expression. You do not speak.

#### ***The Position of Parade Rest***

- a. On "Parade," mentally prepare yourself.
- b. On "Rest:"
  - (1) Raise the left leg from the hip just enough for the foot to clear the ground.
  - (2) Keeping legs straight but not stiff, smartly move left foot to the left and place it down  $22\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  off center line of the body. Heels are approximately 12" apart measured inside the heels and on line.
  - (3) Simultaneously bring hands to the back of the body, un-cupping them in the process.
    - (a) Extend and join your fingers pointing them toward the ground; palms out.



(b) Place the back of right hand into palm of the left hand and with right thumb over left so

thumbs form an "X", pointing down.

- (4) Keep arms fully extended.
- (5) Keep head and eyes forward, maintaining silence and immobility until given command of Attention (e.g., "Flight Attention", "Attention").

### ***The Salute***

In a formation, the salute is rendered at the command, "Present ARMS." The salute is terminated at the command, "Order ARMS."

The steps for saluting are:

PRESENT ARMS (refer to picture below)

- a. On "Present," mentally prepare yourself.
- b. On "Arms:"
  - (1) Bring right hand smartly up the front and centerline of the body, un-cupping the hand as it passes the waist.
  - (2) Extend and join fingers placing thumb along forefinger; keep palm flat, forming a straight line between the fingertips and elbow.
  - (3) Tilt palm slightly toward your face, hold upper arm horizontal and slightly forward.
  - (4) Ensure the tip of middle finger touches one of the following contact points:
    - (a) Right front corner of billed cover.
    - (b) Outside corner of right front of eyeglasses (if worn) if wearing a non-billed cover or no cover.
    - (c) Outside corner of right eyebrow if wearing a non-billed cover or no cover.
  - (5) Remainder of the body remains at position of Attention.

(6) Hold this position until given command of "Order Arms."



### **ORDER ARMS**

- a. On "Order", mentally prepare yourself
- b. On "Arms", smartly lower hand, retracing path used to raise it.
- c. Cup hand as it passes the waist, returning hand to the side of the body.
- d. Body is back at position of Attention.

### **Conclusion**

When CAP members follow military customs and courtesies, they are continuing to demonstrate the importance of CAP's heritage. Practice the position of attention, parade rest and the salute with your squadron leaders.

### **REFERENCES:**

- CAP Manual 39-1, *Civil Air Patrol Uniform Manual*
- CAP Regulation 35-5, *Civil Air Patrol Officer and Noncommissioned Officer Appointments and Promotions*
- CAP Regulation 50-17, *Civil Air Patrol Senior Member Professional Development Program*
- CAP Regulation 52-16, *Cadet Program Management*
- CAP Regulation 900-2, *Use of Civil Air Patrol Seal and Emblem; Use and Display of the US Flag and Civil Air Patrol Flags*
- CAP Pamphlet 151, *Standards, Customs and Courtesies.*